

15, 1902. Hon. Charles S. Grason, was chosen Chairman of the Joint Committee, and Hon. W. D. Cardwell, Secretary.

An interesting and instructive discussion ensued which brought out the fact that in the upper part of the oyster bearing waters of the Potomac, the oysters, by reason of frequent freshets, never reach the size at which it is permissible under the cull law to take them, in consequence of which the whole oyster product of this portion of the river is entirely lost. It was, therefore, suggested that a line be fixed by the sub-committee to be appointed, above which it should be lawful for the citizens of both States to take oysters out of season for planting in the waters of the two States, without regard to the size or to the provisions of the cull law. It was suggested that the said line should extend from the bluff on Cobb's Point Bar, on the Maryland side, to Colonial Beach on the Virginia side.

It was also agreed to shorten the tonging season in the Potomac by one month, and that no tonging should be permitted before October 1st instead of September 1st as at present. It is believed that such a change will prove beneficial not only to those engaged in oystering, but also to the farmers of the tidewater district. Oysters caught in September cannot, as a rule, be marketed profitably on account of the warm weather and, on the other hand, farmers who are usually busy at this time find it almost impossible to secure farm hands because so many laborers go oystering. By making the tonging season open October the first, the farmers can better harvest their crops.

Another subject of discussion was the punishment for violations of the cull law in the Potomac. Under the present provisions of the law, offenders from either State when apprehended have the right to be tried before a magistrate of their own State. Maryland oystermen claim that the Virginia magistrates have been entirely too lenient in imposing fines for violations of the law, thus encouraging the Virginia oystermen to disregard the law. On the other hand, the Maryland magistrates have enforced the law vigorous-